



***Embassy of the United States of America***  
***Port Louis, Mauritius***  
**PRESS RELEASE**

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**The United States and Mauritius partner to protect intellectual property rights**

**Port Louis, September 11, 2013:** The United States Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO) will conduct two training sessions on trademarks in Mauritius in response to technical assistance requests made by the Government of Mauritius under the U.S. -Mauritius Trade and Investment Framework Agreement (TIFA) talks. Mr. John Rodriguez and Ms. Nancy Omelko, USPTO Attorney-Advisors at the USPTO in Washington, will travel to Mauritius from September 16 to September 18, 2013 to carry out the training programs.

On September 16, the USPTO trainers will lead a two-day workshop on trademark examination issues for the technical staff of the Industrial Property Office of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Regional Cooperation, and International Trade. The two-day interactive program will include training and practical exercises on substantive trademark examination issues such as distinctiveness, likelihood of confusion, well-known marks, and non-traditional trademarks. It will also cover issues such as protection of geographical indications and how to handle bad faith trademark filings, among other topics.

In addition, on September 18, the USPTO team will lead a training session on trademark law and practice for Mauritian lawyers at the Institute for Legal and Judicial Studies of Mauritius.

Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) protection and enforcement is one of the priority areas of collaboration under the TIFA. The U.S. Embassy, in collaboration with local public and private sector agencies, has been actively involved in IPR awareness campaign in Mauritius over the past five years. The U.S. Government has also provided extensive IPR training to Mauritian public and private sector officials, with at least 25 Mauritian participants from the Customs Department, the State Law Office, the Industrial Property Office, the Mauritius Police Force, the Ministry of Arts and Culture, the Ministry of Agro-Industry, and the Chamber of Agriculture having taken part in various IPR training workshops and study tours in the U.S. and South Africa.

The benefits of strong IPR protection on the socio-economic development of any country are numerous. IPR protection stimulates innovation, encourages transfer of technology, attracts investment in knowledge-based industries and correlates to national competitiveness.

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